

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

August 17, 2010

Operation Welcome Home serves as the nation's largest State population of Iraq and Afghanistan combat veterans and their families (or survivors). With approximately 30,000 State veterans returning annually, the outreach provided by Operation Welcome is an effective way to make sure new veterans know about the benefits and transitional workforce training available to them.

California's County Veterans Service Offices (CVSO) are funded primarily through county governments' general funds, with more than 84% of their state-wide operating costs provided by their respective counties. The remaining 15% of funding is provided by the State, which is provided for in the California Military and Veterans Code. The original intent of the CVSO funding mechanism, established by Senate Bill 608 in 1997 (Johannessen, Chapter 318) was for the State to share equally the cost of CVSO funding for the counties. During the next 12 years, the Legislature never appropriated the full \$5 million merited and, today the State's annual subvention is still \$2.6 million. In 2009, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed Senate Bill 419 (Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, Chapter 183) which updated the 1997 legislative findings and declarations by declaring that "50 percent of the State's share to fund county veteran service officers is now approximately \$11 million per year."

(M O R E)

MOTION

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

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Despite the growing challenges of underfunding and understaffing, CVSOs' work returns on average over \$200 million to the State's economy. Specifically, for each dollar the State provides in annual subvention, CVSO's bring in on average \$100 in new federal dollars to California's veterans, dependants and survivors. Eighty percent of those Federal payments continue each year for the recipient's lifetime. When spent in California's economy these dollars are a growing stimulus and provide tax revenue. The CVSO's consistently demonstrated productivity makes their subvention program one of the state's most cost effective use of funds. In human terms, beyond the financial considerations, the County Veterans Service Officers help fulfill the covenant between America and those who risk their lives to defend the nation. Daily, in face to face meetings with veterans, their dependants and survivors our County Veterans Service Officers diligently seek to resolve problems and enrich lives.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE THAT the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles send a five-signature letter to our legislative leaders in Sacramento in support of the funding increase for County Veterans' Service Offices with a copy to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

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